

HON. RON PAUL OF TEXAS BEFORE THE US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES November 2, 2005

Big Lies and Little Lies

Scooter Libby has been indicted for lying. Many suspect Libby, and perhaps others, deliberately outed Joe Wilson's wife as a covert CIA agent. This was done to punish and discredit Wilson for bringing attention to the false information regarding Iraq's supposed efforts to build a nuclear weapon-- information made public in President Bush's State of the Union message in January 2003. Special Prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald was chosen to determine if this revelation regarding Valerie Plame, Wilson's wife, violated the Intelligence Identification Protection Act. The actual indictment of Libby did not claim such a violation occurred. Instead, he has been charged with lying and participating in a cover-up during the two-year investigation. I believe this is a serious matter that should not be ignored, but it is not an earth-shattering event. This case, like almost everything in Washington, has been driven by politics-- not truth, justice, or the Constitution. It's about seeking political power, pure and simple, not unlike the impeachment process during the last administration. There are much more serious charges of lying and cover-ups that deserve congressional attention. The country now knows the decision to go to war in Iraq was based on information that was not factual. Congress and the people of this country were misled. Because of this, more than 2,000 U. S. troops and many innocent people have died. Tens of thousands have been severely wounded, their lives forever changed if not totally ruined. The lies Scooter Libby may or may not have told deserve a thorough investigation. But in the scheme of things, the indictment about questions regarding the release of Valerie Plame's name, a political dirty trick, is minor compared to the disinformation about weapons of mass destruction and other events that propelled us into an unnecessary war. Its costs-- in life, suffering, and money-- have proven to be prohibitive.

The Libby indictment, unless it opens the door to more profound questions concerning why we went to war, may serve only as a distraction from much more serious events and lies. The decision to go to war is profound. It behooves Congress to ask more questions and investigate exactly how the President, Congress, and the people were misled into believing that invading Iraq was necessary for our national security.

Why do we still not know who forged the documents claiming Saddam Hussein was about to buy uranium from Niger? Was this information concocted by those who were overly eager to go to war? Why was CIA reluctance regarding this assessment ignored, allowing it to be presented by the President as a clincher for our need to go to war?

Other reasons used to justify the war deserve equal attention, since the results have been so painful for our country. If lies were told to justify the invasion of Iraq, the American people deserve to know the truth. Congress has a responsibility to seek this truth and change our policies accordingly. The sooner this is done the better.